

for suffocating the princes and those other self-righteous dingbats. And I'm very sorry you lost your horse at Bosworth Field. You did in fact have a lot of bad luck. Well so have I!

So maybe you could guide me to the right cream, powder or lotion, whatever it takes to chase my lump away before I start figuring how many people stand between me and England's Throne.

Thanks in anticipation,

Amen.

iii.

O Wise Margaret Thatcher!

I think you're doing a wonderful job in the Falkland Islands. Is it true that a single British submarine destroyed half of Argentina's airforce? Not bad.

But what I'm really praying about is the tea situation in Los Angeles. I've been all over Santa Monica, to the Ambassador Hotel, and I even called the British Consulate. But there is not a single packet of Lyon's Red Label Tea to be had.

Even in Boston where they hated the English there was enough tea to fill the harbor, and I don't suppose it was any godawful Lipton's or Constant Comment. Here in Los Angeles everyone praises my English accent yet I am given cups of perfumed water. What an insult to the Union Jack!

I know I'm not supposed to order saints around, but couldn't you commission a few fighter jets to fly out here and drop, not bombs, but good strong tea, on my or any of my friends' apartments?

Would worship you forever if you came through on this one.

Amen.

WIMBLEDON DUFF

I always look forward to the annual Wimbledon tennis championships, when for two weeks I lock myself in the kitchen with my TV and Wimbledon Duff.

Wimbledon Duff is a pudding made of canned blackcurrants, clotted cream and moldy brown bread. I buy every can of blackcurrants in Sutton two days before Wimbledon, likewise with the clotted cream, but obtain the bread a month before so it can get really fuzzy lying on the table all that time.

The first morning of Wimbledon I start turning out bowl after bowl of the Duff, pausing only to go "ooh" and "aah" at the great shots of the players, and "yum yum mmmh" at the Duff.

Needless to say the flavor of the Duff improves during the course of the championships, as does the tennis, because the poor players are eliminated, as are the unfungified parts of the bread. Also there is less and less tennis and pudding, which makes both seem more valuable.

Another thing that makes the Duff more Wimbledon is that just as the grass on Centre Court gets worn out and turns yellow, so the mold turns white and by Finals Day is as penicillin-rich as the tangiest of low crosscourt sliced backhands, which keeps me healthy till next year.

CONPERSON

I told him he was a bum with a fraud-ridden business that would fail and leave us all penniless. That he stole from department stores and my pockets. And that he'd hidden one of my records and several of my pens. At this point I was so hot I took off my sweater to reveal his best shirt -- the one I'd stolen while he was asleep a week ago.

TENNIS CLUB

Some weeknights I drop by the tennis club, even though they are all a bunch of shopkeepers with fingers in crooked pies. And they're all divorced, looking for an attractive widow like me with a house on Fulton Road and a VW.

Harold wants me to play pitch and putt, Ronald wants to play mixed doubles, and Paul has offered to get me free Fred Perry tennis underwear. But I say let them show me their house on Fulton Road and their VW, plus a good supply of gin, so I can bank mine and draw interest.